

Most difficult cup tie yet says Brian Lee

"THE most difficult cup match that Wycombe Wanderers have faced since I've been here", was manager Brian Lee's opinion of tomorrow's (Saturday) F.A.Cup, preliminary round tie at Tilbury.

Mr. Lee felt Tilbury, currently on top of Division 2 of the Rothmans Isthmian League, were "as good a side as Walton and Hersham", who outplayed Wycombe 4-1 on Tuesday. "They are a big side, aggressive and they don't waste the ball. Above all they attack."

Wycombe's manager and his assistant John Reardon have watched tomorrow's opponents twice recently. Both ended in convincing victories for Tilbury, particularly last Saturday's game, when they beat Wokingham 5-1.

RIDING HIGH

Without doubt, Wanderers could have done with an easier draw at this stage of the competition. They face a side that are riding high in their division with only one defeat all season. That defeat, however, could be significant. It came on Tuesday night when they fell to a 3-2 home reverse at the hands of

Harwick and Parkeston. Tilbury missed a penalty during the game.

Just how much it will reflect tomorrow remains to be seen but the same could be said of Wycombe, who just over a week ago, were also unbeaten. Since then, however, they have gone rapidly downhill.

F.A. Cup preview

It all started with the 2-1 defeat at Hitchin, followed by a lucky 2-2 draw at home to Tooting on Saturday. Then came the hammering at Walton.

So both clubs enter the match with recent defeats behind them.

The Dockers have beaten local rivals Aveley 3-1 this term and also accounted for Dulwich Hamlet 2-0 in a friendly.

They have no injury problems though John Smith missed Tuesday's game. Fred Russell took his place.

Said Secretary Geoff Paisley, "Obviously it's going to be a

tough game. But on our ground we rate our chances highly. We lost Tuesday and deserved it but Wycombe also went down badly, so it's anybody's guess."

Tilbury's team seems to hinge around their big centre back

Welch, who is the Dockers answer to John Delaney - last years Wycombe's skipper who joined Bournemouth. He is always a threat from free-kicks and corners as well as being the outstanding defender.

The two strikers are also a useful combination as Tilbury's goal chart testifies.

Wanderers will again be without their regular first team 'keeper John Maskell. Undoubtedly his presence has been severely missed in recent weeks and either Dave Wright or Paul Barron could play tomorrow.

WON OR LOST

Whether Brian Lee will plump for the sterner defensive work of Ian Rundle to Derek Gamblin's attacking flair also remains to be seen. Midfield is unlikely to change and it is here where the game could be won or lost.

If Larry Pritchard, Rob Williams, Tony Brothers and Mick Holfield produce their best form, goals are bound to come from the in-form strikers Tony Horseman and Keith Searle. Good service and a marked improvement in the whole teams passing is essential, however.



TONY BROTHERS
... top form needed